

## Message Text

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UNCLAS STATE 269264

FOL TEL RPT PARIS 29120 SENT ACTION SECSTATE NOV 7 QTE

UNCLAS PARIS 29120

E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: FR, EC, EDTR

SUBJECT: FRENCH DIRECTIVE ON LOW-VOLTAGE HARMONIZATION

REF: STATE 261174

PASS COMMERCE/BIC HECKINEN

1. ON 12 SEPTEMBER 1975, GOF PUBLISHED IN JOURNAL OFFICIEL DECREE (DECRET NO.75-848 DU 26 AOUT 1975) IMPLEMENTING PROVISIONS OF COMMON MARKET DIRECTIVE (73/23/CEE, 19 FEB 1973) TO HARMONIZE SAFETY REGULATIONS WITH RESPECT TO LOW-VOLTAGE ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT. EC DIRECTIVE CALLS FOR IMPLEMENTATION BY MEMBER COUNTRIES WITHIN EIGHTEEN MONTHS OF PUBLICATION. GOF IS SECOND EC MEMBER TO PROMULGATE REGULATIONS APPLYING PROVISIONS OF DIRECTIVE (AFTER IRELAND); OTHER EC MEMBERS ARE EXPECTED TO DO LIKEWISE IN NEAR FUTURE, WITH EXCEPTION OF DENMARK (WHICH HAS FIVE YEAR GRACE PERIOD).

2. EC DIRECTIVE AND GOF DECREE APPLY TO ALL ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT EMPLOYING VOLTAGES BETWEEN 50 AND 1000 VOLTS AC AND BETWEEN 75 AND 1500 VOLTS DC, ABOUT 70 PERCENT OF ALL ELECTRICAL PRODUCTS SOLD IN FRANCE DURING 1973.

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SPECIFICALLY EXCLUDED FROM THE DIRECTIVE AND DECREE ARE:

EXPLOSIVES, RADIOLOGY AND MEDICAL EQUIPMENT, ELEVATORS, METERS, PLUGS AND OUTLETS, ELECTRIC FENCING, ELECTRO-MAGNETIC FIELDY, AND ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT USED ON AIR-PLANES AND TRAINS WHICH OTHERWISE MEETS INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS.

3. DIRECTIVE AND DECREE PROVIDE FRAMEWORK WITHIN WHICH EC MEMBERS MAY ENTER INTO FUTURE AGREEMENTS (COMMUN ACCORD) TO HARMONIZE SAFETY REGULATIONS. EFFECT ON SUCH AGREEMENTS WILL BE TO FACILITATE FREE MOVEMENT OF ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT WITHIN COMMUNITY, WHENEVER EQUIPMENT HAS BEEN CERTIFIED TO BE IN CONFORMITY WITH ITS SAFETY REGULATIONS (NORMES HARMONIZEES). AT PRESENT TIME THERE ARE NO SUCH AGREEMENTS IN EFFECT.

4. DIRECTIVE AND DECREE ALSO PROVIDE MECHANISM BY WHICH EC COMMISSION, AFTER CONSULTATION WITH MEMBER GOVERNMENTS, MAY PROMULGATE COMMUNITY-WIDE SAFETY STANDARDS FOR ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT (DISPOSITIONS EN MATIERE DE SECURITE). SUCH STANDARDS MUST BE BASED ON STANDARDS APPROVED BY CENELEC OR INTERNATIONAL ELECTROTECHNICAL COMMISSION (IEC). STANDARDS BECOME EFFECTIVE UPON PUBLICATION BY EC COMMISSION, PROVIDED NO EC MEMBER OBJECTS WITHIN THREE MONTH PERIOD THEREAFTER.

5. IN ABSENCE OF HARMONIZED STANDARDS (PARA 3) OR COMMISSION-PROMULGATED STANDARDS (PARA 4), FRENCH STANDARDS (REGLES DE L'ART EN MATIERE DE SECURITE VALABLES DANS LA COMMUNAUTE) CONTINUE TO APPLY. IN CASE OF IMPORTED ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT, DIRECTIVE SPECIFICALLY PROVIDES THAT LOCAL STANDARDS WILL NOT DIRECTLY APPLY. INSTEAD, IMPORTS MUST CONFORM TO SAFETY STANDARDS OF COUNTRY OF FABRICATION, PROVIDED THAT SUCH STANDARDS ARE NOT LESS STRINGENT THAN LOCAL STANDARDS(S'IL ASSURE UNE SECURITE EQUIVALENTE A CELLE REQUISE SUR LEUR PROPRE TERRITOIRE). FRENCH DECREE ADDS QUALIFICATION THAT FABRICATION-COUNTRY STANDARDS MUST BE GENERALLY ENFORCED (NORMES EN VIGUEUR).

6. UNION TECHNIQUE DE L'ELECTRICITE (UTE) IS FRENCH  
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ORGANIZATION RESPONSIBLE FOR SAFETY CERTIFICATION OF ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT. UTE REPRESENTATIVE HAS INFORMED EMBASSY THAT U.S. ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT IMPORTS WHICH BEAR UNDERWRITERS LABORATORIES (UL) CERTIFICATION WILL GENERALLY MEET SAFETY REQUIREMENTS OF GOF DECREE. U.S. IMPORTERS SHOULD OBTAIN UTE CERTIFICATION (SERVICE DE MARQUE) AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. FRENCH IMPLEMENTATION OF EC DIRECTIVE IS NOT INTENDED TO ALTER

PRESENT ACCESSIBILITY OF FRENCH MARKET TO IMPORTED ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT.

7. THERE IS POSSIBILITY THAT INDIVIDUAL FRENCH CUSTOMS OFFICIALS MAY NOT UNDERSTAND INTENDED APPLICATION OF EC DIRECTIVE. IN THIS EVENT, IMPORTER SHOULD DIRECTLY CONTACT CHAMBRE SYNDICALE DES IMPORTATEURS, 21 RUE SAINT GUILLAUME, PARIS (MR. MAS, SECRETARY GENERAL). CHAMBRE SYNDICALE IS PREPARED TO ASSIST U.S. IMPORTERS IN CORRECTING MISUNDERSTANDINGS WHICH MAY ARISE WITH FRENCH CUSTOMS. TO DATE, CHAMBRE SYNDICALE HAS RECEIVED NO REPORTS THAT ACCESSIBILITY OF FRENCH MARKET TO IMPORTED ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT HAS BEEN IMPAIRED BY NEW DIRECTIVE AND DECREE.

8. WILL AIRGRAM FRENCH TEXT OF DIRECTIVE AND DECREE.  
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